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Identical letters dated 2 December 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

Further to our earlier letters to you concerning acts of piracy and provocation committed by the intrusive United States naval forces based in the Arabian Gulf, I should like to inform you that such forces, joined by United Kingdom forces, are continuing to engage in hostile action against vessels carrying civilian merchandise in the Arabian Gulf and in Iraqi territorial waters. They forcibly intercept vessels and assault and question their crews. They also sometimes detain ships and their crews for long periods of time. The most recent acts of piracy and aggression carried out by these intrusive forces are presented below:

1. At 2000 hours on 15 November 2002, mechanical tender No. 72, which belongs to the Iraq Ports Authority, came under armed attack from two naval craft from the United States frigate while sailing near buoy 3 in the Khawr Abd Allah waterway. Sixteen armed soldiers boarded the tender, seized its crew, inspected the tender and then disembarked at 2100 hours on the same day.

2. At 1200 hours on 17 November 2002, the steamship Al-Nasr, which belongs to the Iraq Ports Authority, came under attack from two naval craft from the United Kingdom frigate while sailing in Iraqi territorial waters near buoy 5. Armed men boarded the steamship, seized its crew, attempted to gain access to the holds, broke down the doors, carried out a full inspection and then disembarked at 1600 hours on the same day.

3. At 1700 hours on 20 November 2002, two United States naval craft from the United States frigate stationed near Mina`al-Amiq and Mina`al-Bakr, each of which was carrying eight soldiers, approached Mina`al-Amiq. The soldiers attached a poster bearing the emblem of the United States Navy to one of the iron posts in Mina`al-Amiq and then left for the frigate.

The presence of the United States and United Kingdom fleets in the Arabian Gulf and their ongoing assaults on civilian vessels in the Arabian Gulf and in Iraqi territorial waters is a flagrant violation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and international norms governing the safety of maritime navigation. It is thus an act of aggression and terrorism for which the United States of America and the United Kingdom bear full legal responsibility.

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We urge you to intervene and call upon the two countries concerned to cease such acts of piracy, terrorism and aggression.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mohammed A. **Al-Douri**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative